

PORT OF ENTRY, BUCKSVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA.

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 497.]

JUNE 10, 1842.

Mr. RAYNER, from the Committee on Commerce, made the following

REPORT :

*The Committee on Commerce, to which was referred the memorial of sundry citizens of South Carolina, praying for the establishment of Bucksville, in said State, as a port of entry, report :*

Bucksville is situated on the Waccamaw river, about thirty miles above Georgetown, which is the port of entry for the waters of that river as high as and above Bucksville. The memorialists state that the laws intended for the regulation of the trade of Georgetown have, owing to some misconception, been allowed to operate in such a manner as to harass every vessel coming to the different mills situated on the waters of the Waccamaw ; that great difficulties grow out of the orders issued to the pilots of the Georgetown bar, who are directed to bring every vessel to an anchor (whether bound to that port or not) until she makes a report, to the custom-house at that place, of the number of her crew, their complexion, &c. ; and this, too, after such vessel shall have passed, as is frequently the case, the ordeal of the custom-houses at Charleston and elsewhere.

The memorialists further state, that vessels bound to Bucksville, from Northern ports, often coming in ballast, with urgent orders for the West India markets, are stopped and detained at Georgetown below, and that not unfrequently both a favorable wind and tide are lost, upon which the success or failure of a voyage frequently depends ; that a detention for a very short time at the Georgetown bar frequently causes the loss of several consecutive days, thereby adding expense to delay.

It seems that Bucksville is a flourishing village, whose trade and business are already very considerable, and are fast increasing. In one of the memorials referred to the committee, bearing date February, 1840, the memorialists state that more business is done at the steam saw mills on the Waccamaw than in the ancient port of Georgetown ; that in the course of two seasons fifty-two vessels loaded and departed from the mills at and about Bucksville, independent of those that received their cargoes at the other mills. This memorial further states, that vessels of various sizes are, during the season of trade, continually arriving and departing for the West Indies, the North, and other places ; that these vessels are compelled, under existing circumstances, to stop at the custom-house in Georgetown, deposit their papers, and, after loading at the mills, are subject to another detention on their return down the river, and frequently lose a fair wind, whilst forced to remain in Georgetown during the process of "clearing out."

Another memorial, which has been referred to the committee, dated January 1, 1841, after setting forth the great inconveniences to the trade of Bucksville by the existing order of things, states that already, in the then early period of the business season, there had been shipped from Bucksville alone upwards of one million and a half of feet of steam-sawed lumber, principally for the West India market, whilst from other places on the Waccamaw large quantities had also been shipped, thus affording freight to about twenty brigs and schooners, of various sizes; that the vexatious detentions to which vessels are exposed, owing to the circumstances before alluded to, drive off strangers to other ports, (Savannah, Wilmington, &c.,) and have a tendency to paralyze an active and growing business.

In order to remedy these grievances, the memorialists pray for the establishment of a port of entry at Bucksville, that vessels bound to and from that place may proceed directly, without detention or hinderance.

Although the committee are of opinion that some legislation is necessary for the relief of the citizens of Bucksville, who are engaged in trade and commerce, yet they cannot recommend the making Bucksville a port of entry, and the establishment of a custom-house at that place. The inland trade on the headwaters of our rivers must be subject to partial inconvenience, otherwise the number of custom-houses would be increased to an extent entirely impracticable, while, at the same time, it would vastly increase the expenses to the Government of the custom-house establishment. The committee, however, believe that the desired relief may be afforded to the trade of Bucksville, and the upper waters of the Waccamaw, by making Bucksville a port of delivery, with certain regulations applicable to the case; and herewith report a bill for that purpose.